

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 85, No. 166

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

[Docket No. APHIS–2019–0055]

Notice of Determination of the Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza and Newcastle Disease Status of Romania

AGENCY: Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Agriculture (USDA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: We are advising the public that we are recognizing Romania as being free of highly pathogenic avian influenza and Newcastle disease. This recognition is based on a risk evaluation we prepared and made available for public review and comment.

DATES: This change of disease status will be recognized on August 26, 2020.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. Javier Vargas, Senior Staff Officer, Regionalization Evaluation Services, Veterinary Services, APHIS, USDA, 4700 River Road, Unit 38, Riverdale, MD 20737–1231; Javier.vargas@usda.gov; (301) 851–3316.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The regulations in 9 CFR part 94 (referred to below as the regulations) govern the importation of certain animals and animal products into the United States in order to prevent the introduction of various animal diseases, including highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) and Newcastle disease. Within part 94, § 94.6 contains requirements governing the importation of carcasses, meat, parts or products of carcasses, and eggs (other than hatching eggs) of poultry, game birds, or other birds from regions where HPAI and Newcastle disease is considered to exist.

In accordance with § 94.6(a)(1)(i), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) maintains a list of regions in which Newcastle disease is not considered to exist. Paragraph

(a)(1)(ii) states that APHIS will add a region to this list after it conducts an evaluation of the region and finds that Newcastle disease is not likely to be present in its commercial bird or poultry populations.

In accordance with § 94.6(a)(2)(i), APHIS maintains a list of regions in which HPAI is considered to exist. Paragraph (a)(2)(ii) states that APHIS will remove a region from this list only after it conducts an evaluation of the region and finds that HPAI is not likely to be present in its commercial bird or poultry populations.

In 9 CFR part 92, § 92.2 contains requirements for requesting the recognition of the animal health status of a region (as well as for the approval of the export of a particular type of animal or animal product to the United States from a foreign region). If, after review and evaluation of the information submitted in support of the request, APHIS believes the request can be safely granted, APHIS will make its evaluation available for public comment through a document published in the **Federal Register**.

In accordance with that process, we published a notice¹ in the **Federal Register** on September 16, 2019 (84 FR 48580–48581, Docket No. APHIS–2019–0055) announcing the availability for review and comment of our evaluation of the HPAI and Newcastle disease status of Romania. Based on this evaluation, APHIS concluded that Romania meets the requirements to form part of the European Union Poultry Trade Region (EUPTR), a region of the European Union recognized by APHIS that meets APHIS requirements for being considered low risk of HPAI and Newcastle disease, and for which the importation of live birds and poultry and poultry meat and products is harmonized.

We solicited comments on the notice for 60 days ending November 15, 2019. We received no comments by that date.

Newcastle Disease Detection

On November 29, 2019, Romania's National Sanitary Veterinary Authority confirmed Newcastle disease in one commercial farm with laying hens located in the Nicolae Bălcescu locality,

Călărași County, after an absence of more than 2 years. The affected flock experienced a total mortality of 3,815 birds, and the remaining birds were culled for a total of 6,871 birds. The National Sanitary Veterinary Authority, through the local competent authority, placed restrictions to eradicate the disease and to prevent commodities that could harbor the disease from being exported, in conformity with European Community (EC) regulations regarding the Community measures for the control of Newcastle disease. These measures included a control zone with a radius of at least 3 kilometers (km), and a surveillance zone with a radius of at least 10 km around the affected farm.

Tracing, additional testing, preliminary cleaning, and disinfection measures were completed on December 5, 2019. Other measures, including disinfection of bedding material and treatment of surfaces, were carried out between December 6 and December 20, 2019. A final disinfection was completed on December 27, 2019. Sentinel birds were used to confirm the eradication of the disease. The event was closed on March 2, 2020.

The epidemiological investigation concluded that the occurrence of the disease was due to a combination between breaches in the farm biosecurity that allowed contact with wild birds and failure to comply with the vaccination protocol. No other sick or dead poultry were found in either the surveillance zone or the protection zone. The movement of live poultry and poultry products from Călărași County was prohibited during the entire period of the event.

H5N1 HPAI Detection

On January 14, 2020, Romania's National Sanitary Veterinary Authority confirmed H5N8 avian influenza on a farm in Seini, Maramur County, the first such outbreak in nearly 3 years. The affected flock experienced increased mortality of a total of 11,190 birds out of a flock of 18,699; the remaining 7,509 birds were culled. Romania immediately implemented strict movement restrictions in this area according to EC regulations on protective measures in relation to HPAI. These measures included a control zone with a radius of at least 3 km and a surveillance zone with a radius of at least 10 km around the affected farm.

¹ To view the notice, risk evaluation, environmental assessment, and finding of no significant impact, go to <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=APHIS-2019-0055>.

A second outbreak was confirmed on January 17, 2020, on a farm with 22,762 laying hens located approximately 300 meters from the first outbreak. The affected flock experienced a mortality of 220 birds, and the remaining 22,542 were culled. Strict movement restrictions were implemented, including a control zone with a radius of at least 3 km and a surveillance zone with a radius of at least 10 km around the affected farm. The epidemiological investigation concluded that a vehicle used at both farms was likely the cause of spread. The sequence analysis of isolates showed close relationship to viruses detected in wild birds in Russia in 2018.

No further outbreaks had been detected, and the cleaning, disinfection and treatment of affected premises and of materials and equipment were ongoing in accordance with the procedures established by EC regulations. Commodities from restriction zones (protection and surveillance zones) due to HPAI or Newcastle disease were not allowed to exit zones until the restrictions were lifted. Officials certifying commodities from areas outside of the restriction zones must follow the certification procedures enforced by Romania under national legislation and by the EU under EC regulations.

As we stated in the initial notice, HPAI and Newcastle disease are known to exist in wild populations in Romania. This can lead to periodic events such as those detailed above. However, the scope of the disease events and Romania's response are consistent with our evaluation and do not undermine our conclusion that Romania can be added to the EUPTR. Moreover, because APHIS has determined that the affected birds have been depopulated, we have no reason to believe that HPAI or Newcastle disease currently exists in commercial bird or poultry populations within Romania.

We are therefore adding Romania to the list of countries in which Newcastle disease is not considered to exist, removing Romania from the list of countries in which HPAI is considered to exist, and adding Romania to the EUPTR.

Authority: 7 U.S.C. 1633, 7701–7772, 7781–7786, and 8301–8317; 21 U.S.C. 136 and 136a; 31 U.S.C. 9701; 7 CFR 2.22, 2.80, and 371.4.

Done in Washington, DC, this 20th day of August 2020.

Michael Watson,

Acting Administrator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

[FR Doc. 2020–18690 Filed 8–25–20; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410–34–P

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Forest Service

Caribou Targhee National Forest; Teton County; Wyoming; Grand Targhee Resort Master Development Plan Projects EIS

AGENCY: Forest Service, USDA.

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement.

SUMMARY: Grand Targhee Resort (GTR) has submitted a proposal to the Caribou-Targhee National Forest (CTNF) to pursue approval of select projects from its 2018 Master Development Plan (MDP). The CTNF is considering this proposal and is initiating the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) to analyze and disclose the potential environmental effects of implementing the projects. The proposed action includes: Two areas to be incorporated into the existing special use permit (SUP) boundary with new terrain and lifts; lift replacements and realignments within the existing SUP boundary; additional terrain and on-mountain infrastructure improvements; and enhancement of non-winter and alternative activities.

DATES: Comments concerning the scope of the analysis must be received by September 25, 2020.

The draft EIS is expected to be available for public review in March 2021, and the final EIS is expected October 2021.

ADDRESSES: Send written comments to: Mel Bolling, Forest Supervisor, c/o Jay Pence, Teton Basin District Ranger, Caribou-Targhee National Forest, 1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls, ID 83401; or by email at jay.pence@usda.gov (please include “Grand Targhee Master Development Plan Projects” in the subject line).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Additional information related to the proposed project can be obtained from: Jay Pence, Teton Basin District Ranger, Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Mr. Pence can be reached by phone at 208–354–6610 or by email at jay.pence@usda.gov.

Individuals who use telecommunication devices for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information

Relay Service (FIRS) at 1–800–877–8339 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose and Need for Action

The Forest Service is responding to an application submitted under the National Forest Ski Area Permit Act of 1986 and Ski Area Recreational Opportunity Enhancement Act of 2011 (SAROE) by GTR to implement projects from their accepted MDP. In the MDP, GTR identified a need to improve the recreational experience and address shortcomings in their terrain offerings and operations in order to remain viable in the competitive destination skier/rider market.

To address the growth in the Idaho and Wyoming skier markets and to provide quality guest experiences for all skier levels, GTR will need to continue to develop and improve its terrain and guest services offerings in direct response to evolving consumer demands and the competitive regional and destination skier markets.

The CTNF, through consideration and acceptance of GTR's MDP, has identified a need to:

- Provide additional undeveloped, minimally maintained lift-served terrain and additional traditionally cleared alpine trails to enhance terrain variety and advanced skiing experiences at GTR;
- Provide an appropriate learning progression in an uncongested beginner area and increase the quantity of beginner, intermediate, and advanced-intermediate skiing terrain to enhance the skiing experience for beginner and intermediate skiers;
- Improve the efficiency of the lift and trail network and skier circulation across the mountain by providing more reliable and consistent snowmaking coverage in key areas;
- Update and improve facilities and guest services in the base area and on the mountain to meet the changing expectations of the local, regional, and destination skier markets; and
- Expand alternative snow-based and non-winter activities to provide a variety of year-round recreational options to guests and to more effectively utilize existing infrastructure during non-winter months.

Proposed Action

The proposed action includes the following nine elements:

- SUP boundary adjustments to incorporate the South Bowl and Mono Trees areas into GTR's SUP Area. Combined, these areas total